



# *Safety & Prep*

## How To Prevent Mold

When mold shows up in your fermented veggies it can be really scary and gross. It happens to all of us at some point and it's happened to me many times.

### **What's mold?**

Mold can be round and fuzzy, blue, black or pink and can appear on the surface of your ferment. It can form when the ferment is exposed to air, if the salt ratio is wrong, if the vegetables and tools aren't clean, if you use chlorinated water, if it's too hot and other things.

Don't get mold confused with harmless kahm yeast which looks like a white, milky film.

## Mold on surface

Mold is round, black, blue and fuzzy.



LESSON 3 // HOW TO PREVENT MOLD// FERMENTING VEGGIES

## Kahm Yeast

Is there a white, milky substance on the surface?

This is kahm yeast, which is harmless.



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## What to do if you have mold?

There are many opinions on what to do if mold forms on your ferment. Some people are really sensitive to mold and should avoid it completely, while it doesn't affect others.

If there are small amounts of mold forming on pieces of vegetables that are sticking out of the brine, I just throw those pieces away. If a third or more of the surface brine is covered in mold, I throw the whole thing away, because it grosses me out.

Some fermenters will skim it off the top and eat what's under the brine. Everything under the brine is fine in theory, but if you're sensitive to mold, throw it out. It's not worth the risk.

If mold forms inside the fermentation jar, don't eat it. Something is wrong with it.

More needs to be studied to provide a definitive answer, so go with what your most comfortable with.

## How To Prevent mold when fermenting vegetables

1. **Use fresh ingredients** - Don't use old, soggy cabbage or vegetables for your ferments. At this point they already started rotting on their own and could cause mold.
2. **Maintain good hygiene** - Clean your vegetables. Wash your tools and hands with hot, soapy water before use.
3. **Try to avoid fermenting in a hot environment.** The ideal temperatures for your ferments are between 68 – 80 degrees F. If you're having mold issues and it's hot in your house, try to find a cooler place to ferment or wait until the weather cools down.
4. **Salt distribution** - Make sure salt is evenly distributed in the cabbage when making sauerkraut. When making pickles make sure salt is completely dissolved in the brine.
5. **Do not use iodized salt or table salt.** Table salt has additives that can make the ferment go bad. I recommend fine high quality sea salt.

6. **Purified water** - make sure to always use either distilled or purified water when fermenting vegetables. Tap water contains chemicals like chlorine that harm good bacteria, which could lead to a bad ferment.
7. **Keep veggies submerged under the brine.** The brine creates an environment that's inhospitable to bad bacteria, so everything under the brine is fine. Mold shouldn't form under the brine if you used the right salt ratio.
8. **If you don't use a weight to keep veggies submerged,** stir the surface of the fermented vegetables daily to prevent mold from forming on the surface. Or push vegetables that are sticking out of the brine back down. Sometimes I just close the lid tight and shake them up each day. It does the trick.
9. **Use a jar with an airlock lid.** Airlock lids are designed to prevent air from entering the jar and inhibit mold. Use them with fermentation weights to be extra safe.

Your mold problems should disappear if you follow these tips.

Up next is **"Tips To Make The Best Fermented Foods At Home"**.

Other reads: ["Ways To Keep Veggies Under The Brine"](#).